

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, July 18, 2003

MPDC EXPANDS HOURS OF PHOTO RADAR PROGRAM

In a new effort to curb speeding during late night and early morning hours, the MPDC has announced that beginning this past week, photo radar speeding reduction cameras are being deployed between the hours of 10 pm and 4 am, Monday through Saturday. Five photo radar vehicles will be operational during the overnight hours to monitor speeds on roads where community complaints and crash statistics indicate speeding is a chronic problem. Until now, photo radar cameras have been deployed only between 7 am and 10 pm. According to MPDC statistics, a disproportionately high number of speeding-related fatalities in DC occur late at night or early in the morning. Just this past Thursday night, one man was killed in an apparent speeding-related crash at 10th and C Streets, NE. "We believe that by deploying photo radar vehicles during these overnight hours, we can achieve similar results to what we have seen at other times of the day—fewer aggressive speeders and fewer people killed in speeding-related crashes," Chief Ramsey said. MPDC traffic safety experts also plan to use data captured by the photo radar program to develop additional enforcement strategies targeting the most dangerous speeders—those traveling in excess of 30 mph over the posted speed limit.

Statistics for June show the continued success of photo radar. Just over 7 percent of the motorists monitored by photo radar in June were speeding aggressively, compared with nearly 31 percent of motorists when the program began in the summer of 2001. Latest results at http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speedresults_text.shtm.

JUVENILE SUSPECT ARRESTED IN FATAL HIT-AND-RUN CRASH IN SOUTHEAST

A 13-year-old District youth was arrested this past week in connection with the death of 60-year-old Shirley Pugh during a hit-and-run crash on July 14, 2003. The incident occurred at the corner of Texas Avenue and C Street, SE, when a stolen vehicle allegedly driven by the juvenile suspect ran a red light at a high rate of speed and struck the vehicle operated by Ms. Pugh, a 20-year employee of the DC Department of Human Services. The juvenile suspect is presently charged with Second Degree Murder and could face additional charges. He appeared in the Juvenile Division of DC Superior Court on July 17. Because he is a juvenile, no additional information about the suspect, including his name, can be released. To help combat the serious problem of juveniles stealing cars and "joy-riding" in parts of DC, the MPDC and other agencies are taking a number of steps. In addition to stepping up patrols and traffic stops in the affected areas, the MPDC's Policing for Prevention Office is organizing a youth problem-solving initiative that will engage young people themselves in designing and implementing solutions.

- ① Read the news release about the expanded photo radar deployment:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2194>

- ① In addition to expanding the hours of operation, the MPDC has announced that it is deploying photo radar in a new enforcement zone, on Canal Road, NW, approximately two-tenths of a mile south of Arizona Avenue. The MPDC now has 65 photo radar enforcement zones—a mix of residential streets, major arteries and highways covering all seven districts. Details at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2175>

- ① June statistics for DC's four-year-old red-light camera program are available at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/redlight.shtm>

- ① Read the news release about this tragic hit-and-run fatality at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2198>

- ① The MPDC is also reaching out to vehicle owners in DC in an effort to prevent auto thefts by helping them "harden their targets."

- ① For auto theft prevention tips, including how to participate in the free "Watch Your Car" program, click on:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/autotheft.shtm>

HOTEL EMPLOYEE SEXUAL ASSAULT PROBE EXPANDS

Detectives from the Montgomery County and the MPDC have used forensic evidence to officially link a rape that occurred at a Silver Spring hotel on December 1, 2002 with two similar cases in DC in May. The December 1 rape occurred at the Hilton Hotel, located at 8727 Colesville Road. The victim was cleaning a room when the suspect entered, displayed a box cutter and attacked her. After the rape, the suspect left behind a black beret and a red box cutter with "Debbie" written on it with black marker. The two attacks on hotel cleaning staff in DC occurred on May 11 at the Renaissance Hotel, 999 9th Street, NW, and on May 23 at the Jefferson Hotel, 1200 16th Street, NW. Two other similar rapes are also under investigation by the multi-agency task force that is investigating these crimes: a June 6 attack at the Holiday Inn, 2650 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA; and a June 9 assault at the Courtyard Marriott Inn, 6301 Golden Triangle Drive, Greenbelt, MD. Anyone with information about any of these sexual assaults is asked to call police at (202) 727-9099 or the Crime Solver hotline, 1-800-673-2777.

MPDC WARNS AGAINST "THEFT-BY-TRICK" SCAMS

The MPDC is warning residents to be on the lookout for various "theft-by-trick" scams targeting unwitting victims, many of whom are senior citizens in upper Northwest. Some of these schemes involve strangers who approach their victims on the street, claiming to have found a large sum of money. Victims are told they can get a share of the funds if they are willing to put up some "good-faith money." Others involve offers to earn a large sum of money - \$30,000 in one instance - if the victim can "contribute" a portion of that sum, usually several thousand dollars. In both cases, the suspects offer to drive the victims to their bank (in some cases, multiple branches of the same bank) to withdraw the funds. The suspects in these cases are usually well dressed and may be driving nice looking vehicles. Individuals approached with offers of these or other similar "get-rich-quick" schemes should decline and immediately call the police, with a good description of the suspects and their vehicles. Residents should always wary of any offers that sound too good to be true, especially if they require putting up "good faith money." Because these schemes often target senior citizens, the MPDC asks that residents should reach out to their elderly parents and neighbors, and warn them against such offers.

NEWS & NOTES

National Night Out 2003. Mark your calendars! The 20th anniversary of the National Night Out crime prevention event will take place on Tuesday, August 5. A kickoff event will be held at 5 pm at Fort Stanton Recreation Center in Southeast, and events will be held in all seven police districts. For details, contact your local police district.

New Head of FBI Field Office. FBI Director Robert Mueller this week selected Michael A. Mason to be the Assistant Director in Charge of the Bureau's Washington Field Office. An 18-year veteran of the FBI, Mr. Mason brings to the DC law enforcement community wide experience in investigations and administrative operations.

Drug Free Zones. Drug free zones are in effect this weekend in PSAs 312 and 606. Drug free zones are planned for other police districts next weekend. Details on the Anti-Loitering/Drug Free Zone law are at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/drugfreezone.shtm>.

① Read the updated news release and view composites of suspect and photos of other evidence in these cases at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2198>

① While these attacks all occurred inside hotel rooms, most rapes occur in other locations. For tips of preventing sexual assaults, and information on what to do if you are the victim of a rape, go to:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/street/sexualassault.shtm>

① Learn more about protecting yourself from cons and swindles:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/consumer/avoidswindles.shtm>

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 7/18/03)

- 2003: 138
- 2002: 124
- % Change: +11.3%

Arrests (week ending 7/12/03)

- Total: 906
- Drugs: 118
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 14
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 125

Firearm Recoveries (as of 7/15/03)

- Total: 1,030
- July: 54

Traffic Fatalities (as of 7/18/03)

- 2003: 34
- 2002: 34
- % Change: Unchanged